

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-11, 13-16, and 18-23 are pending in the application. The Office Action rejected claims 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,554,834 to Crozet et al. ("Crozet et al."). Applicants have amended claim 13 to include the features previously recited in dependent claim 17 and respectfully submit that claims 13-20 should be allowed. Crozet et al. fails to suggest or disclose the limitations recited in claim 13-20 and therefore, the claims should be allowed.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-7 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,443,467 to Biedermann et al. ("Biedermann et al.") in view of Crozet et al. Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations previously recited in dependent claim 7. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 1-6 should be allowed because the limitations cited in claim 1 would not have been obvious in light of the cited art.

The Office Action rejected claims 8-12 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Biedermann et al in view of the combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,063,090 to Schlapfer and Crozet et al. Applicants have amended claim 8 to include the limitations previously recited in claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 8-12 should be allowed. The limitations recited in claim 8 would not have been obvious in light of the cited prior art.

Finally, Applicants have added claims 123-125 to further define the claimed invention. The Applicants respectfully submits that the cited references fail to anticipate or render obvious the pending claims because they fail to teach or suggest at least the limitations quoted above. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims are allowable and respectfully request a prompt Notice of Allowance.


Application Serial No.: 10/698,049
Attorney Docket No.: 5259-10700.US.01

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional Filing Fees required under 37 CFR §1.16, as well as any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR §1.17 associated with this communication for which full payment had not been tendered, to Deposit Account No. 01-0025. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the above, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitchell, *et al.*

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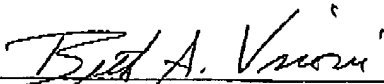
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